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BIOGRAPHY.

The following Sketch of the Life of Doctor A. Macwhorter is extracted from a discourse delivered at his funeral by the Rev. E. D. Griffin.

DOCTOR MACWHORTER was of Scotch extraction. His maternal ancestors were among the first emigrants from Scotland to the North of Ireland; and the family of his father removed to the same country about the time of his father's birth. By his mother he had the honour of descending from martyrs. Both of her maternal grandparents fell a sacrifice to papal fury, in the great Irish massacre of 1641, while England was convulsed by the civil wars of Charles I.* None of the family survived this horrid scene except her mother, who, at that time an infant, was concealed by her nurse, and preserved from impending death. On so minute a providence did the future existence of this luminary of the church depend. His immediate parents, Hugh and Jane, lived in the county of Armagh, in the North of Ireland; where his father was for many years a linen merchant. The eldest of their children, whose name was Alexander, was a son of distinguished talents and piety; and being intended for the gospel ministry, spent two years at the university of Edinburgh. At his solicitation, the family removed to America, about the year 1730, and settled in the county of Newcastle, Delaware; where his father became a distin-

* They were hanged on a tree before their own door.

guished farmer, and an elder of the church, under the pastoral care at first of Mr. Hutchinson and afterwards of Mr. Rodgers, now Dr. Rodgers of New-York. Alexander died before he had completed his studies, leaving a most excellent character; and our future pastor, being born about a month after, bore his brother's name. But so affected were the family with their recent affliction, that his name was not suffered to be pronounced in the house for six months after his birth.

The second Alexander, the youngest of eleven children, was born July 15, 1734. O. S. It was his happiness to be blessed with parents eminent for piety, and abundant in their labours to train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. He remembered, till the day of his death, the tender solicitude of a father who would often take him alone into the woods, and of a mother who no less frequently would retire with him to a private apartment, to exhort him with tears, and to entreat him by all the anguish of a parent's heart to be reconciled to God. These faithful admonitions would often awaken him to temporary seriousness and prayer; and though they did not at once produce an abiding effect, they were not lost.

In February, 1748, when he was in his 14th year, he was deprived of his excellent father, who at his death left four children, all of whom were so many proofs of the happy effects of parental faithfulness. They were all communicants in the church, and lived and died agreeably to their profession. The three eldest being already settled in North Carolina, their mother, in the following autumn, removed into that state, accompanied by Alexander, who left his paternal estate, in Delaware, under the care of a guardian. Here first commenced his permanent religious impressions, under a sermon preached by Mr. John Brown, (one of those evangelical preachers who in that day were called *New Lights*,) from Ps. vii. 12. *If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow and made it ready.* An arrow of a different nature reached his heart. The horrors of guilt, and the terrors of eternal judgment, from that moment assailed him, and for near three years filled him with indescribable distress. He used daily to repair to a copse of pines, near his brother's house, where he resided; and there, to use his own expressive words, *would dash himself on the ground, looking for the earth to open and swallow him up.* Thus the seed of truth, which had been planted by a father's care, and watered by a mother's tears, was preparing to shoot.

After spending two or three years in Carolina, he took his leave,

(and, as it proved, his *final* leave) of his mother, to pursue his education under the direction of his guardian.* At first he was entered in a private school in a small hamlet in Delaware, which has since grown to a village by the name of Newark. Thence he was removed to a public school at West-Nottingham, Cecil county, Maryland, under the care of the Rev. Mr. Findley, afterwards president of the college of New-Jersey. Here the darkness which had long involved him, was dispersed; and he was enabled for the first time to rest his soul on Christ, to a degree that gave him confidence, shortly after, to enter into communion with Mr. Findley's church.

Having continued two years in that school, in May, 1756, being in his 22d year, he joined the junior class in the college which was then in this town. Thus he began his public career in science in the very place which was destined to be the scene of his future usefulness. The ground on which his youthful feet trod, was reserved to be the resting place of his weary limbs, after the labours of more than half a century.

It was already determined to remove the college to Princeton; on which account president Burr's pastoral relation to this church had the year before been dissolved. In October of this year the college was removed, and Mr. Macwhorter belonged to the first class which graduated at Princeton. He took his degree in the autumn of 1757, a few days after the lamented death of Mr. Burr.

Having thus completed his academical studies, he was on the point of returning to North-Carolina, to take his mother's counsel in regard to the future course of his life, when he received the afflicting news of her death. This changed his purpose, and he entered upon the study of divinity, under the instruction of the Rev. William Tennent, the pious and justly celebrated minister of Freehold, in this state.†

In the August following, (1758,) he was licensed to preach by the presbytery of New-Brunswick, which sat at Princeton; and in October was married to Mary Cumming, daughter of Robert

* Before his father's death, Doct. Rodgers, who had taken the charge of the congregation, had remarked the promising talents of this youth, at a time when he and the other children of the neighbourhood were assembled to be catechised by their minister. And now, after his return from Carolina, he received from Doct. Rodgers some affectionate attentions, which laid the foundation of that intimate friendship which ever after subsisted between them.

† See his Life in the 2d Vol. of the Evang. Intelligencer.

Cumming, Esq. of Freehold, a respectable merchant, and high sheriff of the county of Monmouth. By this marriage he was introduced into a family connexion with his reverend instructor, Mr. Tennent.

This congregation, after the dismission of Mr. Burr, fell into a state of unhappy division, which continued near four years. In the collision of interests and passions, too common on such occasions, the people were long divided between different candidates, until Mr. Macwhorter, on the 28th day of June, 1759, preached his first sermon to them. At once they fixed their eyes on him as the object of their united choice.

Mr. Macwhorter had been appointed by the Synod of New-York and Philadelphia to a mission among his friends in North Carolina; and with that view he was ordained by his presbytery, at Cranberry, on the 4th day of July. But providence had formed other designs concerning him. At that very meeting of presbytery, commissioners from Newark appeared, and by their solicitations, seconded by the influence of Mr. Tennent, obtained him for a supply. The people were so well satisfied with his ministerial qualifications, that they harmoniously agreed to present him a call, and he was installed the same summer, at the age of 25, within two years after he had graduated.

In the course of his ministry, he bore an important part in all the leading measures, which, for near half a century have been adopted, to promote the order and interest of the presbyterian church in the United States.

He was among the first subscribers to the *Widow's Fund*, which was established in 1761; and in later life, was for many years a director of that benevolent institution.

In 1764, the synod renewed his appointment to the mission into North Carolina; which gave him an opportunity to revisit his family friends, from whom he had been separated more than 12 years. But this mission came near costing him his life. While in Carolina, he was seized with the bilious fever incident to the climate, which left him with a hectic, accompanied with expectoration of blood, that for two years threatened to put an early period to his usefulness. Yet in this scene of affliction, it pleased God, in the winter of 1764, 5, to encourage him with a revival of religion in his congregation. In the following summer, he received a call from the united congregations of Center and Poplar Tent, in North Carolina; which, though it presented him an opportunity to settle among the children and descendants of his fa-

ther, he thought it his duty to reject. In 1766, the state of his health became so critical, that he was induced to try the experiment of a northern journey; and a tour which he made to Boston in the autumn of this year, proved the means of his sudden and complete restoration. From his first settlement in this place, he had been regularly subject to an attack of the pleurisy once or twice a year; but after this return of health, he experienced no recurrence of the disorder as long as he lived. Except a few short periods of illness, and a paralytic affection in his hands, which he inherited from his father, and which grew upon him as he advanced in years, he enjoyed vigorous health even to old age.

Soon after his return from Boston, the congregation in that town, which had three years before became vacant by the death of Mr. Cumming, his brother-in-law, proposed to him to take a dismission from his people, preparatory to receiving a call from them; as they had conscientious scruples about calling a settled minister. This preliminary step he refused to take, and the business went no farther.

In 1772, he was elected a trustee of the college of New-Jersey, and continued a very important member of that board till a few months before his death.

The same year commenced the second revival of religion under his ministry, which proved more extensive than the former, and continued about two years. At the close of this period, in 1774, the congregation, under the animating influence of their pastor, engaged with a laudable spirit to erect a new church. A considerable sum was raised for this purpose by subscription, and a quantity of materials was collected;* but the revolutionary war, which commenced about this time, interrupted the design; and in the confusion which followed for several years, all the materials were lost.

This town, from its central and exposed situation, shared largely in the troubles of the war. Through the whole of that anxious period, Mr. Macwhorter was an active friend of his country, and partook with his afflicted congregation in the hardships and perils of the revolution. This same year (1775,) he was appointed by congress to visit that district of North Carolina in which he had been before, to employ his influence to bring over the enemies of the revolution to the American interest. But whatever

* This design was carried so far, that early in 1775, the trenches were opened for the foundation of the new building.

zeal and abilities were exerted in this enterprise, it issued, agreeably to his prediction to Doct. Franklin, with little success.

In 1776, he was honoured with the degree of Doctor of Divinity by the corporation of Yale College.

In the following winter, when the American affairs were at the lowest point of depression,—when Washington with a handful of half starved and half naked troops, had fled through Jersey, and abandoned the state to the ravages of the British arms, the warm patriotism of our venerable father carried him to the army, encamped on the Pennsylvania shore, opposite to the city of Trenton, to concert with Washington measures for the protection of this state.* And he was there on the memorable 26th of December, when the American troops, crossing the Delaware, took the Hessians, and turned the tide of the war.

In the summer of 1778, at the solicitation of his friend general Knox, he accepted of the chaplainship of his brigade, which lay then with the main army at White Plains. During the few months that he held this station, Washington was frequently his auditor, and he was often Washington's guest.

In the month of July he returned to his family, and in November following received a regular call from the congregational church in the city of Charleston. On this occasion it was suggested to him, that the friends of our college had fixed their eyes on him as the future successor of president Witherspoon: but notwithstanding this, his mind still inclined towards Charleston. He had the call under consideration till February; but found at last that the state of his family, and the critical situation of Charleston, threatened at that time with an invasion, presented dificulties which it was impossible to surmount.

In the following summer, (1779,) he received a call from the congregation of Charlotte, Mecklenburg county, North Carolina, accompanied with an invitation from the trustees of Charlotte Academy to accept the presidency of that institution.

This was an infant seminary, which promised, under the fostering care of such a president, to become an important seat of learning. It was situated in the midst of his relatives, and in a part of the country where he might hope to be removed from the alarms of war. His congregation too had become much deranged by the calamities of the revolution, and his salary was deemed insufficient for his support. All these things considered, he judged

* The Rev. Mr. Vanarsdale, of Springfield, feeling the same glow of patriotism, accompanied him in this excursion.

it to be his duty to accept the call; and his friends in the congregation, under existing circumstances, did not oppose his removal. His pastoral relation to this church was accordingly dissolved; and in October he took his leave of Newark, furnished, by the liberality of his afflicted people, with every article needful for his journey.

Scarcely was he settled in his new abode, when the troubles of the war found him there. The army of Cornwallis, scouring the country, entered Charlotte. The Doctor with his family fled. Upon his return, he found that he had lost his library and furniture, with almost every thing that he possessed. He remained in Charlotte about a month after this calamity; but apprehending new inroads from the enemy, he quitted the place in the autumn of 1780, and returned to Abington, in Pennsylvania, where he engaged to preach for the winter. The people of Newark, hearing of his misfortunes, and influenced by the mingled emotions of sympathy and respect, invited him to make them a visit. This he did in February, 1781. They soon after sent him a regular call; in consequence of which he returned in April with his family; and though he was never reinstalled, he was considered and acted as the pastor of the congregation till his death.

In the autumn of 1783, just at the close of the war, the trustees of Washington Academy, in Somerset county, Maryland, ignorant that Doct. Macwhorter was permanently settled, offered him the presidency of that institution, with a salary of 300*l.* a year. But though the principal object of the institution was the education of pious youth for the gospel ministry, and though the neighbouring country opened an extensive field for his ministerial labours, his attachment to a congregation which had recently given him such ingenuous proofs of affection, rendered it impossible for him to accept this invitation.

The following year, (1784,) the long troubles of the pastor and congregation, were succeeded by a glorious revival of religion, which continued for two years. In no period of the Doctor's ministry, was he observed to be so deeply laden with a sense of everlasting things, and so ardent in his desire to win souls to Christ. Besides his labours on the Sabbath, he preached several times in the week, and spent a part of almost every day in catechising, exhorting from house to house, or attending religious societies. In this precious season, more than a hundred souls were added to the church.

This revival led to an important change in the practice and dis-

cipline of the church. One evening in the autumn of 1785, when the Doctor's mind was deeply impressed with divine things, he expressed to two of his friends, in a private conversation in which he was unusually tender and communicative, his concern for the want of discipline, and the looseness which prevailed in the church; which he attributed to what has been called, *the half-way practice*. It is still in the recollection of those persons, in what a solemn and indignant manner he deplored this practice, which he averred was contrary to the usage of the primitive church, and the opinion of the best fathers. He had found it here, he said, when he was settled;—but added with a sigh, how to get rid of it he did not know. He stated the necessity of drawing a line of separation between the clean and the unclean, and proceeded, in a distinct manner, to sketch the plan which he approved; which was precisely the same that the session afterwards sanctioned.

As the subject was in a measure new to his friends, they listened to it not without surprise; but the veneration which they felt for their pastor, and the influence of his opinion, roused them at once to serious attention to this matter. They soon became convinced, and were the means of convincing others. Under the solemn impressions of that period, the practice which the pastor had condemned began to be contemplated in the congregation with increasing concern. Still the hazard of a change was dreaded, and the doubts of some were to be overcome. The more timid apprehended that a departure from long established usage, might lead to contentions and divisions. At length, however, after much inquiry and deliberation, the session, in 1790, took up the subject in earnset. The Doctor publickly advocated the proposed reformation, forcibly alleging that no half-way members can be found in the bible, that there are but two classes of men, and that they who are qualified to offer their children in baptism, are equally fit for the other sacrament. The decisive manner in which he treated these topics, and others less distinctly recollected by the surviving elders, removed every bar; and it was solemnly and unanimously decided, *that from that time, no persons should own the covenant with a view to offer their children in baptism, and to neglect the Lord's Supper; and that the examination of candidates for communion, which had been left to the minister only, should in future be conducted before the session.*—And this has been the practice of the church ever since.

While this business was in agitation, the design of erecting a new church, which had been interrupted by the war, was re-

sumed; and met at once with so much encouragement, that in September, 1787, in less than a month after the business was moved, the Doctor had the pleasure of laying the foundation stone; not however on the same lot that had been selected before the war. Urged forward by the influence of some, and encouraged by the liberality of all, he himself obtained by subscription a large proportion of the sum expended on this spacious and elegant building. He went into other congregations to solicit money and materials; and so zealous was he to serve and animate the congregation, that, during the following winter, he was daily in the forests, selecting timber which had been given him, and encouraging the workmen. On the first day of January, 1791, the house was opened for public worship, and was soon after elegantly completed: and it "stands," in the modest language of your benefactor, "as a monument of the generosity and public spirit of this society." But *your* language will be: "It stands as a monument of the love and indefatigable exertions of our deceased pastor." And *my* prayer is, that it may stand as a lasting remembrancer of his many warnings and instructions, which these walls have reflected upon your ears.

While the new church was erecting, the Doctor's attention was called to another subject of a still more important nature. He was one of those great and good men, who, in 1788, had principal influence in settling *The Confession of Faith*, and framing the *Constitution* of the Presbyterian Church in the United States; and in transferring the authority of the highest judicatory from the Synod to a General Assembly, which met first in May, 1789. —Ten years afterwards, when a board of trustees for the General Assembly was incorporated by the Legislature of Pennsylvania, at their session in the winter of 1798-9, he was named in the charter as one of the board, and continued to hold this trust, until the growing imfirmities of age induced him, in 1803, to resign it.

In 1796, he was blessed with another revival of religion in the congregation, by means of which 30 or 40 new members were added to the church. In 1802, the fifth and last revival under his ministry commenced. This continued two years; and in that period, 140 new members, besides those received from other churches, were added to our communion; of whom 113 were received in the course of 12 months.

In former years, Doct. Macwhorter had been employed by the trustees of our College to obtain subscriptions in this town for the

benefit of that Seminary: and when by the late disastrous conflagration the College edifice was consumed, they appointed him, in the spring of 1802, to solicit benefactions in New-England, to aid in the erection of a new College. Advanced as he was in years, his public spirit would not suffer him to shrink from the task; and in the issue he brought more than 7000 dollars into the College funds. On very many less important occasions, his singular skill and public spirit were called forth in a similar way; but these it is neither proper nor possible to enumerate.

My reverend father lived to a good old age. As I have heard him say, *he lived to see two worlds die*. He trod the path of life with those who have long since gone to rest. Your fathers knew him; and he helped to fit those for heaven whose aged dust now sleeps in that hallowed ground. He baptized most of you; and will shortly meet those faces at the bar of God which he covered with the sacramental water.—When I have heard him talk of the events of other times, and the well known characters with whom he acted on the public stage, before I had existence,—and saw him alone amidst a younger race,—I have often contemplated him as a venerable oak which once stood in the midst of the forest:—the ruthless axe of time has laid his companions low: and now he stands alone on the open plain, and every withered leaf trembles in the blast. That trunk which seventy winters had in vain assailed, must fall at last, like the companions of his youth. He *has fallen*;—and is gathered to his fathers! He no longer stands alone in the open plain;—he is surrounded once more by the companions of his youth, and stands, we trust, transplanted and renewed among the trees in the paradise of God.

Yes, he lived to a good old age, and saw what changes the current of threescore years will make in a transitory world. In the spring of 1800, at the close of the last General Assembly that he attended, he felt a desire to visit once more the place of his nativity, which he had not seen for more than 40 years. He made an excursion to Newcastle county; and when he arrived on the ground which had often been paced over with his infant steps, he knew it not. Every thing was changed. The information of strangers was necessary to tell him that there his father lived. A cellar half filled by time, marked the spot where he first drew breath. He could find none that knew him, and but one aged person that ever knew the family. He requested only to be supplied with a glass from the spring that used to slake his boyish thirst, that he might say, "I have tasted that spring again;" and this desire fulfilled, he hastily turned and left the scene forever.

On the evening of the 25th of December last, he received an injury from a fall, from which he never recovered. He went to the house of God no more. In the first stages of his illness, he said little which discovered the state of his mind, except the often repeated sentence, *It is the Lord, and he does that which is perfectly right.* In February, when the dissolution of his aged consort was manifestly approaching, and his own nature was sinking under infirmities, his younger son was taken off by a disease, so rapid in its progress, that his parents, though in the neighbourhood, knew not that he was sick till they heard that he was dead. At that awful moment, I visited the father with a trembling heart, expecting to find him overwhelmed with these complicated calamities. But I found him composed and submissive to a degree that told me, I had never known this man of God before. From that time, the submission and piety of his heart shone forth with increased loveliness; his constitutional reserve was in a measure gone, and his conversation often breathed the tenderness and sweetness of gospel humility and comfort. On the 2d day of April, the wife of his youth closed the long scene of her sufferings, with all the interesting tokens of child-like piety. He sustained the shock, as he had done his other afflictions, with submission and patience. He had now nothing to do but to make arrangements for his own approaching dissolution. He sent an affectionate and impressive farewel to his brethren of the Presbytery; he distributed his volumes of sermons among his children, grand-children, and relatives; and gave directions about his funeral. I could never discover in him any solicitude about death, except an anxiety to be gone. *I die slow; I never expected to die so slow*, he would sometimes say. One day I ventured to suggest to him a hope that he might yet be continued with us, and begged him not to despond. *I have no despondency*, said he; *death and I have long been intimates.* To a hint that I could not do without him, he replied with paternal tenderness, *God will give you strength according to your day: only trust in him and he will support you under every trial.* I never discovered any impatience in him, except when he was told that he was better, and might possibly recover. When reminded that he was going to the companions of his youth, he replied with emotion, *Yes, there is a precious company of them! O what a precious company!* When it was suggested that the God whom he had long and faithfully served, would not forsake him in old age, he answered with quickness

and apparent uneasiness, *that he had no faithfulness of his own to rely on,—that a review of his life afforded him little satisfaction,—that it had been miserably polluted,—and that his only hope rested on the atonement of Christ.* He repeatedly lamented, in strong language, the imperfection of his life, and discarded every hope but that which the gospel affords. I said to him, about three weeks ago, "You do not at any time find your prospects clouded?" He replied, *No, blessed be God! I have a steady hope.* Always patient, and always composed, he sometimes appeared transported with Pisgah views. A few evenings before his death, he was observed wrestling with God for his release from the flesh. While he lay in the struggles of death, I asked him whether he still enjoyed the light of God's countenance. He lifted his hands and eyes in a way of strong affirmation. The last word which he uttered, was expressive of a desire that we should unite with him in prayer. A few minutes before he expired, he gave his hands to two of his friends as a farewel token, and expressed by signs a wish to unite with us once more in prayer. As the supplication was making that God would release him, and receive his departing spirit, he extended both of his arms towards heaven at full length, seemingly in the transports of faith and desire. It was the last motion that he made. His hands fell and moved no more. That moment the difficulty of his respiration ceased; he appeared perfectly at rest; and in five minutes breathed forth his soul, without a struggle, into the bosom of his God. He expired 37 minutes past 7 o'clock, on Monday evening, the 20th instant, aged 73 years and 5 days.

Thus lived, and thus died Doctor Alexander Macwhorter, after having served this people in the gospel ministry 48 years.

The memory of the just is blessed! Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!

RELIGIOUS AND MORAL ESSAYS.

Mr. Editor,

In the Magazine for July there is an essay, which is intended as an answer to a dissertation of mine, that was inserted in the Magazine for February. Allow me, sir, to correct some misrepresentations in the essay, and I promise not to trouble you again on the same subject.

Referring to the dissertation, the writer of the essay says, "From the editor's preamble, and from the dissertation itself, it would seem, that the writer is of opinion that *all* children should be excluded from baptism, whose immediate parents *do not offer* them to God in that ordinance." The editor, in the preamble, uses the words *not qualified to offer*, but the writer of the essay changes them into *do not offer;* materially altering the sense. It was not my object, in the dissertation, to inquire whether *proxy-baptism*, as it has been called, be lawful or unlawful, proper or improper. Nor was it the object to inquire, under what conditions sponsors may consistently be admitted. The object was to inquire into the qualifications of the *subjects* of pædobaptism.

With the doctrine of the Confession and catechisms on baptism, I am perfectly satisfied. In the Shorter Catechism it is stated, that "the infants of such as are members of the visible church are to be baptized." But the writer of the essay does not understand it "as stating that the infants of all others shall not, in any case, be baptized." I do not blame the writer for entertaining his own opinions. He has as good a right to think as I have. But, in the Larger Catechism, he will see the reason assigned, for which the infants of believing parents *only* are to be baptized. This must remove every doubt, as far as the sentiments of the compilers of our standards are concerned.

The writer of the essay is of opinion that the children of deceased parents, who were members of the visible church, ought to be baptized. This is not disputed in the dissertation. It is even conceded, agreeably to our confession and Larger Catechism, that the church-membership of *one* of the parents is sufficient to entitle a child to baptism.

The writer of the essay is also of opinion that "When a child of parents, who are not members of the visible church, is removed, while young, from its parents, and introduced into a religious family, the head of that family ought, at his own request, to be admitted to offer that child in baptism." He considers "the translation of a child into the family of a sincere christian as a promising event for the child." So do I. But he appears to forget that the discussion relates *exclusively* to the *baptism* of *infants;* to the baptism of children at an age when they are not capable of giving their own consent. It is the case of children in a state of infancy, that is contemplated in our Confession and catechisms, and that was contemplated in the dissertation. Whether it be proper to call a child of *thirteen* years of age a *young* child, I leave

others to judge. At any rate, it is unusual to call a child of thirteen an *infant*. Whatever may be the acceptation of the word among lawyers, there is, I think, no such acceptation of it either in common conversation, or in the New Testament. We read that *infants*, or babes, were *brought* to the Saviour for his benediction. We have no reason to believe that they were above their *seventh* year; which is called the termination of infancy by naturalists.

The whole discussion, then, turns on one point; the *right* of children to baptism when they are not capable of giving their own consent. Let the Larger Catechism be heard. "*Infants* descending from parents, either, both, or but one of them, professing faith in Christ and obedience to him, are, IN THAT RESPECT, WITHIN THE COVENANT, and to be baptized." It has been said, that the moral reason of baptism is founded in the right of education. Still this right must belong to the parents; though they may transfer the exercise of the right to others. But is not baptism a *privilege*, as well as a duty? And have not the compilers of our standards assigned the reason of baptism as a privilege? Must not the child's right be derived either from the sponsor or from the parent? If from the sponsor, then not from the parent; and if from the parent, then not from the sponsor. Is not every privilege, civil or ecclesiastical, which a child enjoys, derived from the parent? Is not the contrary opinion, as it respects baptism, alike inconsistent with the nature of things, and with the economy of the evangelical covenant?

To me the reasonings for admitting children to baptism, when neither of the parents is a member of the visible church, from the history of circumcision, is not conclusive. Were any to plead that the head of a christian family ought not to have any unbaptized persons in his family, who are fit subjects of baptism,—were they to plead that he is bound to say to them, "Make a profession of faith in Christ, or leave my family;" were they to plead that so much as this is fairly deducible from the history of circumcision, I would not dispute with them. But, "although it be a great sin to contemn or neglect baptism;" yet, there is *a due order* which must be observed. The injunction to Abraham is express. But it does not imply that he was to circumcise any in a state of infancy, when neither of the parents was externally in covenant with God. Indeed the contrary is implied: For all who were in his family, were in the church. It was not the injunction that *gave* the right; though it bound to the duty. Certainly there is a great difference between a precept and a promise; between a duty

and a privilege. Besides, I would ask, Is there an exact analogy between the case of the head of a christian family and that of Abraham when the injunction was given to him to circumcise every man-child in his house. It has been suggested, that Abraham, on this occasion, is to be considered as a type of Jesus Christ. Be this as it may, we must believe that the apostle understood the Abrahamic covenant, and the conditions of admission both to circumcision and to baptism, better than any of us. What says he? *The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife; and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.* 1 Cor. vii. 14. Applicable also are his words in Rom. xi. 16. *If the root be holy, so are the branches.* It may be added that the injunction to Abraham related to persons of two descriptions; such as were *born in his house*, and such as were *bought with his money*. Under the Old Testament, slavery was permitted for salutary purposes. Eventually it was a blessing. Does a christian buy a child with his money? Does he consider it his duty to present the child to God in baptism? Ought he not *first* to inquire whether it was his duty to purchase a human being?

Is baptism nothing more than an ordinance of *initiation* or introduction? nothing more than a seal of church-membership? Is not this view of it far too low? From the nature and ends of baptism is it not evident that the children of believing parents are *considered* as comprehended, with them, in the covenant, of which baptism is a seal? Was not *the sign of circumcision to Abraham a seal of the righteousness of faith?* And is not baptism a seal, not only of the christian profession, but of union to Christ? I would be glad to be informed in what sense the children of unbelieving parents are to be considered as within the covenant.

"The feelings of humanity," in its present state, are not a certain criterion of what is morally right or wrong. But, if the feelings of one man plead for the promiscuous admission of infants to baptism, the feelings of another, equally humane, plead as powerfully against it. The admission of persons to the seals of the covenant, whether infants or adults, who ought *not* to be admitted, is, in my view, not only impious, but cruel to the souls of men.

Do not the scriptures carry through them a discrimination between the children of *believing*, and the children of *unbelieving* parents? Must this distinction, which is divine, be destroyed? Besides, when our opinions bear the smallest signature of doubt, is it not a good rule to try them by their moral influence. It was sug-

gested in the dissertation, that, as the obligation to bring up a child in the way of the Lord is *antecedent* to baptism, the delay of baptism, in many instances, would have a good effect both on the parents and on the children. There are *illegitimate* as well as *legitimate* children. Were a householder to be compelled to present all under his care for baptism, would it not have a tendency to break down the barriers between virtue and vice, and to encourage debauchery?

Mr. Editor,

The following short and practical discussion of a topic with which many of your readers may have little acquaintance, and on which, notwithstanding, they may be exposed to difficulties at some time or other, is offered for publication in your magazine.

It has been an old objection of infidels that all religion depends on bodily temperament: And even those who do not wholly reject revelation, have sometimes imputed the exercises of eminent christians principally or wholly to this cause. But a careful attention to facts and comparison of them, will most clearly confute this notion, and show it to be grossly absurd.

Physicians, I believe, mention the *sanguine*, *the melancholic*, *the choleric*, and the *phlegmatic*, temperaments as distinct; and show that there may be a mixture and modification of them in a variety of ways. But take any of them distinctly, or any combination of them that may be imagined, and you shall find two persons in all respects of the same temperament, so far as we can possibly judge, (and it is begging the question wholly to say that they differ where we cannot judge) and one of these persons shall be eminently pious, and the other eminently wicked, and this too when other circumstances are as nearly similar as can easily happen. How often is this verified in children of the same family? I am aware that among such children there is often a remarkable difference in their intellectual powers, as well as in their moral dispositions and habits. But often likewise there is a remarkable resemblance: and where the intellectual powers and the natural temper and system of the affections seem to be entirely the same, it is frequently seen that one becomes distinguished for piety and that another never attains it. Now to say in such a case as this—a case which every attentive observer may examine for himself—that there was some secret modification of temperament, which, though not discernible, must notwithstanding have existed, is just a petitio principii; or rather it is to believe in direct op-

position to evidence.' It is to impute an effect of the most important kind to a cause which we not only cannot prove to exist, but which all the proof we can have, goes to show does not, and cannot exist.

That different temperaments have an effect on moral dispositions, and on religious exercises too, rendering certain attainments comparatively easier to one than they are to another, and giving a turn to sentiments and trains of thinking, is not only a truth, but a truth of some importance. But the very same thing may be said of the different situations and circumstances of life, in which different persons are placed in the order of divine providence. One class has to contend with unspeakably more difficulties and opposition, or is called to a much harder conflict, than another; but still this does not prove that the difficulties are insurmountable, or that the conflict is not required, and the victory justly expected. In all these varieties of temper and situation, piety, very eminent piety, has frequently been found.

In such a sudden and wonderful change of character as was witnessed in col. Gardiner, and which has taken place in many others whose obscure rank in life has prevented their cases from being so generally known, it would seem as if demonstrative proof were afforded that religion does not depend on temperament, or a love to it on any natural cause. What! after a man has lived to the age of thirty or forty years, and all the powers of his nature are not only evolved but established and confirmed by habit, shall he in a single hour, or day, have them all changed, inverted, or new directed? Shall he on a sudden, and without any sensible change, either to himself or others, in his bodily health or feelings, or in his intellectual powers,—shall he become a new man in all his moral dispositions, affections and habits? Shall this be the effect of some new modification of the material particles of his bodily organization—some change arising from bodily temperament? To believe this, seems to me a much harder article of faith than any which is contained in the gospel.

I have myself known a man who, till he was between sixty and seventy years of age, was destitute of religion, and then, without sickness or affliction, became eminently and steadily pious. Was this the effect of temperament? He who affirms it, may affirm any other absurdity imaginable.

That melancholic diseases often manifest themselves by an apparent anxiety about religion, which *subsides* when the bodily malady is removed, is certainly true. But the just and natural in-

ference from this is, that true religion, which is *durable and permanent*, is not produced by any such cause.

In what manner, and to what precise extent, the bodily organization does affect the human mind, either in its intellectual or moral powers, is a point which we can never fully ascertain or settle. We know, however, that our natural constitution, as well as all the circumstances of our birth, education, situation, rank and employment in the world, are equally and perfectly disposed of by the superintending providence of God: and, therefore, whatever influence they have, just serves to show us how absolutely we depend on him. It shows us that he is perfectly a *sovereign*. But it can by no means justify us either in questioning the perfect equity of his dispositions and government, or in supposing that moral action is to be resolved into mere physical causes. This latter sentiment leads to downright atheism; and it is in fact the direct tendency of that system of materialism which has had so many advocates both in Europe and America for some time past.

MISCELLANY, ORIGINAL AND SELECTED.

A LETTER FROM THE PRESBYTERY OF NEW-BRUNSWICK ADDRESSED TO THE CHURCHES UNDER THEIR CARE.

Dearly beloved Brethren,

YOUR pastors and elders, being assembled in presbytery, and taking into their most serious consideration the present state, necessities, and prospects of the church, have thought it their duty to address you on an occasion so important to the interests of our common christianity. On the ordinary duties of christians we have nothing to add to the pious exhortations which you so often hear in the house of God, except it be unitedly to recommend what, as individuals, we have never been able too earnestly to inculcate, or too frequently to reiterate, the necessity of constant and fervent prayer to the great Head of the church for the effusions of his holy spirit to quicken the graces of his people, and to awaken in their hearts that ardent and public spirited zeal for the prosperity of Zion, which the present indications of divine providence, and the circumstances of our country, and of this period, seem peculiarly to require. Permit us to invite your attention to these circumstances, and to the duties they impose, which call for the most vigorous and disinterested exertions; for some portion of the

the spirit of the primitive disciples, that we may become *workers together with God* in accomplishing the great events, the dawn of which appears to be opening on the church, and on the world.

If we turn our view, in the first place, to our own country, we behold the boundaries of our American Zion extending with unexampled rapidity. Our brethren emigrating to the uncultivated recesses of the wilderness, have, at the same time become separated from the stated ordinances of religion, and have left far behind them that precious word by which they, and their children should have been nourished to eternal life. They resemble the first families after the deluge, who spread themselves abroad upon the face of the earth into different and distant regions. And, like them, they are liable to lose, in their dispersions, the first principles of truth, and to deviate into all the errors of ignorance and superstition, if not ultimately of pagan idolatry, unless our christian sympathy and charity prepare the means of following them with the light, and the inestimable blessings of the gospel. In what moving accents, then, do the spiritual wants of your countrymen, and the still more deplorable dangers of their posterity, address themselves to your christian benevolence!

But dear brethren, *God who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those who believe*, is opening another door to your pious charity, and graciously affording you another opportunity, so desirable to every sincere believer, of extending the kingdom of the ever blessed Redeemer. Many of the aboriginal tribes of the country residing within the limits of the United States, convinced, at length, of the superior advantages of civilized life over the savage state, and of the christian religion over their gloomy and degrading superstitions, are now earnestly soliciting your charitable aids to convey among them the blessings of both. Each of these most valuable and important ends is the more likely to be attained by being associated with the other. Formely, our efforts have been rendered abortive by dividing them; but lately these efforts promise a more successful issue, by pursuing these ends together, and endeavouring to impart to these children of nature, civilization and religion at the same time. Christians! the untutored savage, amidst all his ignorance and wretchedness, is now extending a supplicating hand to you for relief. That hand, so often stained with the blood of your brethren, solicits to be *washed in the blood of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*. Disciples of the compassionate Redeemer! listen to the cry from the wilderness; and hasten to make *waters break out* there, and *streams in the desert*, which shall

cause their waste and desolate places *to rejoice, and blossom as the rose.*

It is with the most lively pleasure we have it in our power farther to inform you, that Divine Providence seems to be opening the way for the extensive diffusion of the gospel over the East. From those regions of the globe the light of divine truth first dawned upon the West; and from the West it is again returning to re-illumine the birth place of religion, and the human race. Is not the period then fast approaching when, according to the prayers, and long continued hopes of the church, the Sun of Righteousness shall enlighten the whole earth? Missionaries have been found who, with a truly primitive and apostolic zeal, have consecrated themselves to the holy and the arduous service of carrying the glad tidings of salvation, to those remote nations who have been so long sitting *in the region and shadow of death.* Forsaking all the endearments of country and friends, they have put their lives in their hands for the sake of Christ, and braved the dangers of almost boundless oceans and of distant and unhealthful climes. No labour have they declined; but, amidst incessant toils in preaching the gospel, and the innumerable avocations and duties incident to their arduous and hazardous situation, they have set themselves to acquire the languages of many different nations, and with infinite attention, to translate into the languages the sacred scriptures, that the various people of Asia may say, with the astonished multitude at Jerusalem, *how is it that we hear, every one in our own tongue, the wonderful works of God?* An undertaken so vast, but which promises such triumphs to the gospel, cannot be carried into complete effect without proportionable revenues. Societies have been formed in different parts of Europe, who, with a disinterested zeal, and a noble liberality, worthy of the best age of the church, have endeavoured to create adequate funds for the accomplishment of this great object. Tartary, the vast region of India, and the islands of the great South Sea, have already felt the happy influence of European charity. But we also, christian brethren, are called, in divine providence, to lend our aid to a work so glorious. Imitate the example of the primitive believers, who, though poor, could yet enable their apostolic missionaries to carry the glorious gospel of our salvation to every nation under heaven.

God, who has abundantly blessed you *in your basket and your store*, justly requires of you a portion of his own gifts, for the happiness of mankind, who are your brethren. Nor is it a barren and unprofitable sacrifice which he demands. For your good works

will encompass you in the great day of his judgment with the blessings of nations enlightened and saved by you. And, in the exercise of these amiable deeds of charity, you may rely safely on his gracious promise, that those who have been the means of *turning many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars for ever and ever, in the kingdom of their Father.*

But, dear brethren, let us recal your attention more particularly to the state of our own country, in which you see the harvest widely extended, and daily becoming more extensive, while the labourers employed to gather it bear no proportion to its increase. The very enlargement of the boundaries and population of our country affords some ground for melancholy reflection to a pious mind, when it is considered how many portions of it are likely to be destitute of the means of grace—when it is considered how many of the aged, and most useful servants of Christ are daily leaving their works below for their reward above. *Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.* But prayer alone is not the whole extent of our duty. It is necessary, with diligence and fidelity, to employ every mean which wisdom can suggest, or charity accomplish, to augment their number. When we have done all that Divine Providence has graciously put it in our power to do, we may prudently and safely rely on the blessing of God for the success of our efforts. But seldom does he appear to perform any extraordinary work for his church till he has first awakened her pious zeal to prepare the means that naturally lead to the end which has previously been the object of fervent and believing prayer. Much are labourers wanted to cultivate the extensive and growing vineyard of the Lord. We need a great increase of faithful pastors to oversee, and feed the flock of Christ; men, not only of that warm, and elevated piety which will prompt them to make the greatest sacrifices to the glory of the Redeemer; but men of those abilities and attainments in both divine and human knowledge, which will enable them *rightly to divide the word of truth;* men who will be able to defend the church which they edify; and, while they excite and nourish the graces of the believer, shall be able also, in *the day of rebuke, and of blasphemy*, to repel the attacks of the scorner, and the infidel. Never were the united influences of talents and piety more necessary in the church. But whither shall we look for help? Those who have been *set as watchmen on the walls of Zion*, to watch for her safety, have long turned a solicitous attention to this subject, and they would now lay before you the result of their reflections.

They see with concern that, in this period of luke-warmness, few in the higher classes of fortune, even among those who are most favourably disposed towards religion, and who possess the means of commanding the most enlarged and liberal advantages of education, are voluntarily offering themselves to undertake the arduous and self-denying functions of the sanctuary. With not less concern they see the growing wealth of the country, either dissipated in luxury, or exhausted in avaricious enterprize, as yet but little turned to forming establishments in favour of science and religion. Learning is obliged to provide for its own support by the heavy charges laid upon education, a circumstance which has placed its best advantages beyond the reach of the greater part of those who are in the humbler ranks of fortune, among whom, chiefly, we expect to find that ardent and disinterested zeal which the present state of the church requires. Retired and obscure, they need to be sought out, and drawn forth, by those who have the interests of religion most deeply at heart. Diffident, they need encouragement. With a very narrow patrimony, or entirely without patrimony, they need support. Not possessing the means of frequenting the first places of learning, even genius and piety have not dared to look up to the service of the church, as being too far above them.

After the most careful inquiries, therefore, to learn in what way adequate supplies for the churches in these American lands, may be most effectually created, none has occured which promises so much success as that of seeking for poor, ingenious, and pious youth, drawing them from their retirements, and, at common expense, educating them for the service of Christ in the gospel.

In these ideas, the supreme judicatory of the presbyterian church in the United States has warmly and earnestly concurred, recommending to the several presbyteries, subject to its jurisdiction, the adoption of such vigorous and prudent measures as will be likely to give them the most speedy and complete effect. But, brethren, while this wise and pious design will require the utmost circumspection in selecting proper candidates for the patronage, and the service of the church, it is evident also, that it will require, on your part, the most liberal and charitable aids. Religion, among us, neither demands nor receives any civil provision, but depends, as in the first age of christianity, on the voluntary bounty of its disciples. Hence you are the more frequently called to exercise that spirit of charity which is the distinguishing ornament of the christian character, and it is an exercise which serves to make the disciples of our common Saviour feel, in a higher

degree, their relation to him, and to one another. God hath committed to our benevolence and zeal the support and extension of his kingdom upon earth, that we may have his glory ever before us as our end, while we are contributing to promote it; that we may be united to our brethren in a purer and stronger affection, while, by our sacrifices, we are advancing their highest and everlasting interests; and that we may be the more sensible of our own infinite obligations to our Redeemer's love, while we are extending its precious benefits to them. In order then, that we may raise up *labourers for the vineyard of Christ*, pastors for the flock of the great *Shepherd and Bishop of souls*, in this period of extraordinary necessity, beloved and christian brethren, we must renew, and most strenuously urge our appeal to your piety and charity; to your compassion for souls which are *perishing for lack of knowledge;* and to your regard for the glory of God, who condescends to place his principal glory in the salvation of men. Is it much to bestow a pittance of your earthly goods on him *who though he was rich yet for your sakes became poor?* For what you give to his disciples, he graciously considers as done to himself. Remember what prodigies were accomplished even by the poverty of the first christians, in carrying the glorious gospel of our salvation throughout the earth. In what other way could you employ, to so much advantage, or with so much pleasure to a benevolent heart, a portion of that fortune, whether great or small, with which God has blessed you? Your alms you would cheerfully bestow on the temporal necessities of your poor brethren; but here you bestow a benevolence, most acceptable to God, on the necessities of the soul. An individual would not solicit your charity in vain; but here you are preparing *the bread of life* for thousands, who will convey it down to thousands more, who are to come after them to the end of time. All the able and faithful ministers of Christ, whom you may be the means of educating, and bringing into the church, are blessings conferred, not only on the individual congregations in which they may hereafter be placed, but on your country, and on mankind, which may descend from generation to generation when you shall have long finished your course, and shall, we trust, be resting in heaven. And will not every soul that shall ascend thither after you, from the long succession of the heirs of your munificence, add a new ray to the glory of your heavenly crown?

In the conclusion of this letter, dear brethren, permit us to renew our exhortations and entreaties to you. Let not the flock of Christ continue to languish for want of pastors.—Let not the pure

light of the gospel, which now shines upon the churches, be lost, and give place to the gloom of superstition, or the wild disorders of enthusiasm.—Let not our brethren, who are settling on the vast frontiers of our country, sink into ignorance and irreligion; and while they gain a miserable portion of the earth, lose an immortal inheritance.

As all the ordinary means of raising up a pious and able ministry for the church seem to be inadequate to her necessities and her wishes, if the measure now proposed by the assembly, and pursuing by the respective presbyteries, should fail of success, the prospect before us will be dark indeed. Brethren, the success is in your hands. You are witnesses, and it is with pleasure and with confidence we can make this appeal, that we are not seeking any personal interest; we are not pleading for any extraordinary emoluments for the priesthood; but if you truly love the Redeemer, and the prosperity of Zion, we are pleading the cause of your own hearts. If a gospel ministry is necessary to the existence, and the due administration of the ordinances of religion; if it is necessary to the preservation of divine knowledge in the world; and if it is of the highest importance to the promotion of order and good morals in society, to which facts, scripture, experience, reason, and your own conviction, bear ample testimony, then we are pleading the cause, not of God only, but of yourselves, and your posterity; of your country, and of human nature. Your liberality alone, and that repeated from time to time, can enable the presbytery to comply with the pious intentions of the assembly, and fulfil almost the last hopes, as far as they depend on human aid, of the friends of pure and evangelic piety. In the name of your Redeemer, therefore, so dear to every sincere disciple of Christ; in the name of society and of posterity; and in the name of so many immortal souls, who are ready to perish, we appeal to your benevolence. Cast your offerings into the treasury of God's temple; bring your sacrifices to his altar; however small they may be, if they are offered with a pure heart, and a disinterested zeal for his glory, he will multiply them a hundred fold in blessings to his church, and to you.

Signed by order of the Presbytery.

ROBERT FINLEY Moderator.
DAVID COMFORT, Clerk.

Maidenhead, June 10, 1807.

FROM A MOTHER TO TWO SONS IN TROUBLE.

My dear children, I have heard of your trouble and losses. My heart feels for you with all the tenderness of a mother. But do not be too much cast down. Trust in God and you shall yet praise him. Look to him as a merciful and all powerful father. He sees fit to try us at times with very gloomy dispensations of his providence. But in his mercy he often makes a way for us beyond what we could think or expect. My dear children, despise not the chastenings of the Lord, nor faint when you are rebuked of him. It is in these deep trials that we see the wonderful works of the Lord. If he makes you poor in this world, and makes you rich in faith and good works and heirs of the kingdom of God, all these losses and crosses will be mercies to your souls. Go daily to God and tell him all your troubles; cry to him for his supporting grace to help in this time of need; and say not in your heart he will not hear, neither will he do good nor evil. This the enemy of your souls will suggest, and the flesh will readily join with him; but, oh my dear children, trust in God though he slay you; remember the sufferings of our dear Saviour, and of the prophets and apostles, and what feats they did through faith. God is the very same to day that he was then. Luther, the beloved of the Lord, made many a meal on a broiled herring, and no doubt heartily thanked his God for it. My dear children, receive all from God's hand with thankfulness. It is far more desirable to me that you should be as Lazarus than as Dives. It is no mark of God's displeasure that you have to bear the cross. They whom the Lord loves he chastens. These are fiery trials and hard to the flesh, but if God sanctify them to you they will be precious to your souls. Continue then patient in well doing; and after you have done the will of God wait for his promise. Wait for the answer of your prayers, and it will come and not tarry. It will come in God's time which is both best and right. Beware of murmuring. Strive to keep your minds stayed on your God, and you will find that your present sufferings are not worthy to be compared with the glory that God will reveal in your souls even in this life, which is indeed an earnest of that which is to come. God takes from us the things of this world that we may have our all in him; I have often thought that all had forsaken me but my God. But I have found in him, at all times, a place of rest and peace, only when my disobedience has deprived me of it; and indeed to whom else, or whither else, should we go? It is God alone that has the words

of eternal life, and has all power both in heaven and earth. My health is fast declining. It may be the blessed God will take me shortly to himself. It is right for us to keep death always in view. Blessed be my God, I am enabled to bear my afflictions with patience, and to say, with my whole heart, I am willing to be in any state my dear Lord chooses to place me in, so it shall be for his own glory. Now, my dear children, submit cheerfully to the cross, and with faithful Abraham believe firmly in God, and give glory to him in all things; and remember that this faith is the gift of God, and cannot be obtained in your own time, but you must wrestle for the blessing as Jacob did, until the day of salvation break in upon your souls, and the blessed God set your feet, on the banks of deliverance, and fill your mouths with living praises to your God.

OF THE CONVERSION OF ST. AUGUSTIN, OR AUSTIN, TRANSLATED FROM HIS CONFESSIONS, b. viii. c. 12.

St. AUSTIN was born at Tagasta, of christian parents, in the year 354, an inconsiderable village in the kingdom of Algiers in Africa. He early exhibited convincing proofs of genius, and was instructed with more than ordinary care. Early in life he became a distinguished teacher of rhetoric, first at Tagasta, then at Carthage, afterwards at Rome, and lastly at Milan, where he was made acquainted with St. Ambrose. During this period he alternately embraced the religious sentiments of several different sects, and led a debauched life. He had with him at Milan two intimate friends, Alypius and Nebridius. One day, being at his lodgings with *Alypius*, (after having had an affecting conversation with a venerable old priest, named *Simplician*,) an *African*, named *Pontinius*, who had a considerable place at court, came to visit him. When they sat down to converse together, *Pontinius* perceived a book upon the table, before them, which he opened, and found it to be St. *Paul's* Epistles, which *Austin* now read diligently. *Pontinius* was surprised to find there that book alone, instead of books of polite literature; upon which he looked on St. *Austin* with a smile mixed with wonder and joy, for he was himself a zealous christian. *Austin* having told him, that he applied himself very much to that kind of study, *Pontinius* congratulated him; and the conversation turned upon St. *Anthony*, and the austere lives of the poor unlearned Monks in the desert, concerning whom neither *Austin* nor

Alypius had heard before. *Austin* was much affected with what passed in the conversation. It was twelve years since the reading of *Cicero's* Hortensius had excited him to the study of wisdom. He had sought for truth, and he had found it: he only wanted to come to a determination to obtain a victory over himself; for the neglect of which he felt that he had no longer any excuse.

Pontinius being gone, *Austin* rose up, and addressing himself to *Alypius*, with his countenance much altered, and in an extraordinary tone of voice, he said, "What is this! what shall we do? Ignorant people come and take Heaven; and we with our learning, senseless wretches that we are, behold, we are immersed in flesh and blood! Are we ashamed to follow them? But is it not more shameful, not even to be able to follow them?"—*Alypius* looked upon him, without giving any answer, being surprised at this change; and followed him, step by step, into the garden, whither he was hurried by his present commotion. They sat down at as great a distance from the house as they could. *Austin* groaned with indignation, that he could not resolve upon what seemed to depend on his own will: he tore his hair, he beat his forehead, and he clasped his knee with his hands joined together. *Alypius* did not leave him, but waited in silence the event of this extraordinary agitation. *Austin* finding himself under a necessity of giving vent to his grief by cries and tears, rose up to get farther from him: conceiving solitude (says he) to be more fit for the business of weeping.—"I threw myself down,—(in what follows we use his own words, as most unexceptionable in such a case)—I threw myself down, I know not how, under a certain fig-tree, and there gave free scope to my tears; floods broke out from my eyes, an acceptable sacrifice to thee, O Lord: and though not in these words, yet to this purpose, I said many things to thee: 'And thou, 'O Lord, How long, how long, O Lord wilt thou be angry; unto the end?—How long, how long: to-morrow and to-morrow? Why not now? Why not this very hour put an end to my filthiness!'—I spoke these things, and wept with the most bitter contrition of heart; when, behold, I heard a voice, as from a neighbouring house, of a boy or girl, saying, in a singing tone, and often repeating, *Tolle, lege*, Take and read; and presently my countenance being altered, I began to be very intent to consider, whether in any kind of play, children were wont to sing any such words; but I could not call to mind, that I had any where heard the like. Whereupon my tears being suppressed, I got up, interpreting it to be nothing less than a divine admonition, that I should open

the book and read; therefore I returned in haste to the place where *Alypius* was sitting, for there I had laid down the Book of the Apostle, when I arose from thence: I eagerly caught the book, opened it, and read in silence the place on which I first cast my eyes: *Not in revellings and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envy: but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provisions for the flesh to fulfil the lust thereof.* I would read no further, nor was there any necessity; for with the end of this sentence, as if a light of confidence and security had streamed into my heart, all the darkness of my former hesitation was dispelled. Then marking the place, with a countenance calm and serene, I related the whole to *Alypius;* who desiring to read the passage, he looked on farther than what I had read. The next words were,* *Him that is weak in the faith do you receive,* which he applied to himself. By this admonition, he was strengthened, and without any disturbance or hesitation of mind, joined himself to me in my good resolution, which was very agreeable to his manners and virtuous education, in which long before, he had far surpassed me.—Hence immediately we go in to my mother;† we relate our resolution to her; she rejoices at it: she exults and triumphs, and blesses Thee, *who art able to do above what we ask or understand;* so happy was she in seeing so much more granted her by Thee on my account, that she had been wont to ask with so many tears and groans: for Thou hadst now converted me to Thee in such a manner, that I sought not for any hope of this world, being resolved wholly to dedicate myself unto Thee: and Thou *turnedst her mourning into* a much more plentiful *joy*, than she expected or even desired."

The following extract is from the Christian Mirror, a recent publication. It will serve to exemplify the faults to which a person of ardent feelings is liable, even when earnestly engaged in pursuing a religious course.

"Miss L. was a young lady of an amiable temper, great sincerity, and uncommon flow of spirits; to these natural qualifications was added every accomplishment which might be expected from an affluent situation in life: her company was sought by all the

* It is to be remembered, that at this time, the writings here spoken of, were not only in manuscript, but undivided by *chapters* and *verses*.

† Monica, the mother of St. Augustin, was eminently pious, and had been long and most fervently praying for the conversion of her son.

young and gay of her acquaintance, and every visit seemed dull, if Miss L. was not of the party.

"Her friends, however, discovered that she suddenly became gloomy and melancholy; her company was no longer pleasant, and she, whom every one had admired and flattered, was sneered at as a methodist,* and avoided as a religious enthusiast; the only kind of *enthusiasm* which worldly people uniformly condemn. A man may be an *enthusiast* in poetry, painting, music, or philosophy; that is, he may be unreasonably attached to them, and the world will admire him for that very attachment; but let him shew as great a zeal for the cause of God, and the welfare of his soul, (a cause to which our attachment can never be unreasonably strong, nor our attention too eager,) and every tongue will condemn him.

"The following circumstance occasioned the change in Miss L. which rendered her so very disagreeable to her former admirers. On a Lord's day evening one of her friends proposed going to hear a popular minister, who was to preach in the town where she lived. As, from unexpected disappointments, they could not make up their party at cards; it was thought the dull hour might as well be passed away in the house of God, and accordingly these two ladies agreed to go. The discourse was occasioned by the death of a young person who had been suddenly called into eternity: the sermon was adapted to the event, and, for once in her life, Miss L. became serious. She listened, mused, wondered at the truths she heard, and in vain endeavoured to conceal her flowing tears. When the service was over she went home with her companion, but not a word was spoken. Each of them carefully concealed from their friends the place where they had been; the one, because she was ashamed of what she felt, and the other, because she was angry with herself, for having been the occasion of all this anxiety and distress to her amiable friend. It was, however, soon visible enough to all, that Miss L. was deeply affected with something; but nobody could account for it: one suspected she was ill, another that she had been offended: they were willing to suppose any thing, rather than that their gay companion could be so weak as to be affected by any thing said in *a pulpit*. They thought of a thousand other causes, while she at an early hour retired to her chamber; but it was to weep, not to rest. The faithful warnings of the preacher still rung in her

* The name of Methodist is applied to many classes of dissenters in England.

ears, and she could not sleep. Her distress continued for several days, and was increased by the attempts of her friends to remove it. Their amusements, their pleasures, their vain conversation was loathsome to her: instead of healing they aggravated the wound in her conscience; and in the whole circle of her acquaintance there was not one who could direct her to a remedy. At length it was settled, by all, that she had lost her senses; and the poor distracted girl became the subject of conversation and pity in every company. It was found out that she had been *meddling* with religion, and there was not a doubt but it had made her mad. Every expression of sympathy for her was mingled with caution against having too much to do with religion; and her connexions rejoiced in the persuasion, that they had just enough to carry them to heaven, without the possibility of its causing any derangement on earth. Indeed, her distress was so great, that, had she not met with relief, it might have ended in *real* lunacy: but he 'who knoweth our infirmities, and remembereth we are but dust' administered to her strong consolation. Under hearing the same minister, who had filled her mind with terror, she experienced a degree of comfort. While he was representing Christ as the able and willing Saviour of the chief of sinners, her fears were dissipated, the garment of praise was given her for the spirit of heaviness, and the oil of joy for mourning. She now became as cheerful as ever, but her happiness flowed from a different source: praise was continually in her lips. She became anxious to bring her acquaintance to the same Saviour whom she had found, and fondly imagined if they would but give her a hearing, they must be convinced.

As her carnal acquaintance soon forsook her she acquired a new set of acquaintance, who, though inferior to her former ones in quality, in fortune, and in rank, were greatly superior to them in virtue, piety and solid worth. Their society contributed much to her comfort, and growth in grace. She had a heart peculiarly formed for the enjoyments of christian communion, and she frequently stood in need of the counsel, and sometimes of the gentle rebukes of her judicious friends. Her inexperience in religion, and the warmth of her temper, frequently led her into errors. She was always judging of her state in the sight of God, by her own frame and feelings: thus, if she was in a lively frame, she would think well of her state, but when her natural spirits sunk, she would then imagine there was no grace in her heart. The last sermon she heard was the worst, or the best she had

ever heard in her life: and if the preacher did but move the passions, however injudicious, or erroneous, if not grossly so, he was sure to have her applause. If any person appeared at all under serious impressions, Miss L. would at once pronounce them converted, and was, sometimes, angry with the more grave and thoughtful, who wished to judge of the tree not by its blossoms but by its fruits. Her friends lamented her want of self-government; she was somehow betrayed into levities unbecoming her profession. Being in the habit of feeling and speaking warmly, she often made strong declarations of attachment, when, perhaps, she hardly meant half what she said; and sometimes she would make promises, without considering whether she could fulfil them; not to say that she now and then forgot to fulfil them when she was able to do it.

"Hasty in her decisions, she would often say and do many imprudent things, and frequently did not use the best means for attaining desirable objects: though it must be allowed, by her activity in embracing seasons of doing good, she often accomplished her end, when the more prudent and cautious christian has lost the season, in reflecting upon the most proper means of improving it. The poor often felt her benevolence, and the afflicted were often refreshed by her kind and friendly visits: her soul was disposed to sympathy; she wept with them that wept, and rejoiced with them that rejoiced. Lukewarm professors would be disposed to mark every little failing in a character whose zeal reproached their own indifference: and it is to be lamented that she so often furnished them with an opportunity. Her more intimate friends admired the excellencies, without overlooking the defects of her character, and would sometimes warn her of her danger; neither was she backward in taking reproof: but whether the warnings were not given with sufficient faithfulness, or repeated with sufficient frequency, we cannot determine: however it was, Miss L. seemed but little benefited by them; her natural disposition got the better of every effort, and she continued the same imprudent, affectionate, changeable, amiable creature.

"At length her haste and imprudence became its own cure; and the kind providence of God accomplished that by afflictions, which the concern of her friends had in vain attempted. A few months after Miss L.'s conversion, her relatives became so far reconciled as to behave towards her with civility, and she visited

them occasionally. At first her visits were short, and she was always upon her guard; being generally accompanied by some christian friend. But one day, unhappily, she made one among a large party, composed of carnal and worldly persons. Miss L. was determined to show them she was not ashamed of her religion; indeed, pride, under the disguise of zeal, was her principal motive for making this visit: accordingly she took the first opportunity of introducing her favourite subject; none of the company seemed disposed to listen to her, except a military gentleman, who was too polite not to attend to a lady. Miss L. delighted that at length she had obtained a hearing, went on most fluently, began to fancy she was doing good, and at last could not help exclaming, 'Dear captain D. how I long for your conversion!' The captain replied, with his accustomed politeness, 'I should be happy, Miss L. to be *converted* by you, would you favour me with another interview?' This was agreed to without a moment's thought. From that time they became intimate. The captain left off swearing, and other outward immoralities, attended Miss L. with the utmost assiduity to the house of God, admired all that she admired, and so completely won her affections, that he very soon possessed himself of her fortune, and her person, by a precipitate marriage. It was in vain that her friends argued with her on the propriety of waiting to see if there was really a change in the heart of the person to whom she was about to attach herself for life. She was too proud of her convert to doubt a moment of the reality of the change. All remonstrances were useless; she declared that the finger of Providence was so evident in the whole affair, that nothing should restrain her. As soon as captain D. had gained the object, he was not very ceremonious in throwing off the mask which Miss L. had given him the trouble of wearing but for a short time: at first he laughed at all religion as fit only for women and fools, and at length, he openly and violently persecuted his amiable wife.

"It is unnecessary to enter into a particular account of the trials which Mrs. D. was now called to undergo. With difficulty, and very rarely, could she attend the public means of grace; and in a great measure she was cut off from all her religious connexions. These were heavy trials. She had no companion but her Bible, no friend but her God and Saviour, no means of grace but those of a private nature: nevertheless she has often said that before her afflictions, she *talked* about religious enjoyments; now she *knew* what they were. Her devotions were in-

deed often interrupted by blasphemy and abuse, her Bible sometimes taken from her; but nothing could separate her from the love of God, and the enjoyment of his presence. She now lived and walked by faith, in a more eminent degree than she had ever done before. She had abundant occasion for all her natural spirits, and if she had not been remarkably favoured in this respect, must have sunk under her heavy burden. What the kind endeavours of her friends could never effect was now produced by the severity of affliction; and a degree of excellence appeared in the character of this lady which had never before been manifested. Her cheerfulness appeared truly amiable, and unmixed with the frailties to which she had been subject. As she was now forced to read more, and converse less about religion, her judgment became more solid. Her zeal was in nothing diminished; but it was tempered with prudence. By her meekness and patience she has often disarmed the rage of a brutal husband; yet she displayed fortitude in what she knew was right and consistent with the divine will: but she had already, to her cost, experienced too much the sad effects of the weakness of her own judgment to shew any thing of vain-glory, or positivness in defending her opinions.

" This flower, which now displayed new charms, and appeared peculiarly beautiful, was not long to adorn the garden of God on earth. Severe trials, in a few years, exhausted the spirits of the once animated Miss L.; and though her mind was vigorous, and her soul in prosperity, yet her body sunk under the pressure of accumulated trials, and after a short and rough continuance here, she was removed into that state 'where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

In the year 1762 the following essay was published in a newspaper in London. We give it a place in our magazine, both on account of its own excellence, and to contrast the method of entertaining newspaper readers which prevailed at that day, with the one that exists in our times.

Christian is the highest style of man. YOUNG.

IT is unpleasing to remark, how few of the number who profess the faith of Christ, and bear the name of christian, fulfil the sacred obligations of that faith, or live agreeable to the truth and importance of that name. Yet nothing can be more certain, than

that the profession of a faith, and the bearing a name, without a correspondent life and actions, will be worse than unavailing—will be pernicious and fatal: a reflection which many chistians seem not much inclined to make. What St. *Paul* says of the *Jew*, and his privileges, may justly be applied to the christian; "He is not a *Jew*, who is one outwardly: neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a *Jew*, who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God."

Have we not, then, in these words, a key to the grand and most essential characteristic of the *christian?* He is not one who depends upon external privileges or ceremonies; who places his hope of salvation in any outward work or service; or who fondly thinks that his mere profession of the faith, or attachment to a peculiar church, his obedience to enjoined modes or forms, or his knowledge of the great principles of his religion, will alone recommend him to God, or ensure his future and eternal felicity. —But convinced, that God will accept only the heart, he endeavours that from thence, as the fountain, may flow the free and uniform streams of willing obedience. Engaged by the love of God in Christ, he loves him in return; and this love in his soul is the active and vigorous principle of all his conduct, both to God and man.

Hence it is, that in every external act of duty to his Father and Redeemer, he is always found zealous, regular, and constant. The same divine love which bows his ready knee to private prayer in his closet, carries him, with devout cheerfulness, to the assembly of the saints, to the great congregation, that he may unite in the praises of the Lord: and if he be master of a family, engages him to call together his happy house, that they may present their joint supplications before the throne of grace. Actuated by the same engaging principle, he omits no opportunity, which his situation allows, of remembring *him* in the blessed communion, who forgot not the dearest interests of his creatures; and will never fail those, who gratefully remember his adorable mercies to mankind. The hypocrite, it is true, may perform these services; but the christian only performs them acceptably, for he performs them in love. And to mark the difference between such a one and a mere professor, be it observed, that the religion of the former continually attends him, and is never laid aside, like a Sunday suit: in all the offices and occurrences of life, as he acts

upon the same principle, so he acts rightly and conscientiously. It is true, he is not, he cannot be supposed, absolutely free from error or mistake; but he is always free from wilful and corrupt prevarication.

Whatever relation he bears in life, he considers it his duty to fulfil that relation, as to Christ, and not to men: hence he becomes a faithful and affectionate husband, a tender and careful father, a kind brother, a steady and zealous friend, an obliging and hospitable neighbour, a worthy master, and a loyal subject. —In all his dealings with others he maintains the strictest integrity and justice, ever bearing in mind, and acting conformably to that golden rule of moral conduct which the gospel delivers, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," in the like circumstances and situation. A rule, which alone would serve to render him benevolent and charitable, as well as just, were he not animated to be so by a thousand other motives, which concur to make him exemplary in works of humanity and piety.

While thus the christian endeavours (through the love of him in whom he believes) to fulfil every duty towards God and man, he forgets not *himself*; but desirous to eradicate every evil temper, to destroy every corrupt passion, and to gain a perfect renovation of his nature, he watches with assiduous care over his soul, examines his heart with impartial severity, mortifying every vice to which he finds himself prone, cultivating every virtue of which he perceives the deficiency: to this end he places always before him the great example of his beloved Saviour; and knowing that he is called to imitate him, and then only can be styled a christian properly, when he has the mind or disposition which was in Christ, he makes it his labour to trace out the virtues and tempers in Jesus peculiarly designed for imitation, and constantly copies after them, however faintly, however imperfectly.

Convinced especially how much depends upon inward tempers, these he watches with especial diligence; and as words and actions flow from them, his first care is to purify the fountains, as well assured that then the streams will flow clear. Humility, he righty judges the basis of all christian virtues, and love the perfection; no wonder, therefore, that he is above measure studious in the improvement of them.

These are some faint outlines of the character of a christian; a character, which infidels themselves must acknowledge to be amiable; and after which, if all who bear the sacred name, would

aspire, no argument would be found so effectual to silence every opposer of our most holy faith. But alas! we are not, we do not even attempt to be what we profess. We sit down in a languid indifference, content ourselves with some faint efforts, some weak external services; and wedded either to profit or pleasure, are neither warmed by the love of Christ, nor influenced by those high objects which our faith presents to us. Yet we may be bold to say, that as no man here upon earth is, or can be so happy as the true christian, so no honour can be equal to that which attends this excellent character. But of these points more hereafter.—Let it be observed, that as we have here been drawing the picture of the advanced christian only, we have not attempted to speak of his faith, further than as productive of its genuine fruits. However, with respect to it, let us add, that he believes what is revealed in the oracles of God; that, in comformity to the faith of the universal church of Christ, he believes that man has sinned; Christ has died for him; and that eternal redemption is procured for all who believe in, love and obey him

ANECDOTES.

A LATE Chinese emperor, on receiving information that his enemies had raised an insurrection in one of the distant provinces, said to some of his friends, "Come, follow me, and I promise you we shall soon destroy them." He marched forward, and upon his approach the rebels submitted. All expected he was about to take a fearful revenge, and were astonished to see the captives treated with mildness and humanity. "Is this the manner, in which you "fulfil your royal promise," exclaimed his first minister. "Your "royal word was given that your enemies should be destroyed, "and now you have pardoned all, and even condescended to caress "some." "I promised," replied the emperor, with a generous air, "to destroy my enemies; it is done, for I have made them my "friends." *Go*, reader, and *do likewise*.

PROTECTION.

"Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep—the Lord is thy keeper!" *Psalm* cxxi. 4, 5.

After the emperor Solyman had taken the city of Belgrade, a poor woman complained to him that some of his soldiers had car-

fied off her cattle, in which her little all consisted, privately in the night. "You must have been in a deep sleep," said the Sultan, with a smile, "if you did not hear the robbers." "Yes, my "sovereign," replied the woman, "I did sleep soundly; but it was "in the full confidence that your highness watched for the public "safety."

"By their *fruits* ye shall know them," said our Lord. Mr. Hart expresses the same sentiment in one of his hymns.

No big words of ready talkers,
No loud doctrines will suffice;
Humble souls and holy walkers,
These are dear in Jesus' eyes.

An Athenian, wanting eloquence, though truly brave, after a cowardly, but pompous orator had, in a brilliant speech, been promising great things, arose and said, "Men of Athens, *all* that he has SAID I will DO!"

IDLENESS.

"This we commanded you, that if any would not work neither should he eat."—2 Thess iii. 10.

A beggar in London, soliciting charity with many sighs and tears and lamentable gestures, complained that he had about him a private disease which shame restrained him from discovering to the eyes of men. Some gentlemen having relieved him, one had the curiosity to instruct his servant to go and inquire of him what that private infirmity might be, which he was so unwilling to discover. The servant overtook him, and delivered his commission. After viewing his face, breast, arms, legs, and finding all his limbs in apparent soundness, "Why friend," said he, "I see no cause for your complaining." "Alas, sir," added the beggar, "the disease which affects me you cannot discern—it has crept through all my body and into my very joints and marrow. The calamity is by some called IDLENESS and by others SLOTH."

"*I know thy works.*" Rev. ii. 2.

Antalcidas the Spartan, being asked what action worthy of renown he had ever done, replied, "If I have performed any the gods are acquainted with it."

REVIEW.

From the Christian Observer.

I KNOW not any department in which the vigilance of a Christian Observer may be more usefully exerted, than in the dectection, exposure, and confutation of those noxious principles which too frequently find their way into our modern productions of literature and taste. It is a sufficient drawback upon the morals of the country, that those authors, who are generally referred to as standards of sound composition, should be liable to so much objection on points of decorum and virtue. This is, however, an evil upon which, while we may utter complaint, we cannot, to any effect, employ animadversion. Shakspeare and Congreve on the one part, and Swift and Sterne on the other, have gained the public suffrage; and are, therefore, likely to form, to a certain degree at least, parts of every liberal and popular education. Besides, these authors are not in being; they cannot, therefore, be benefited or put to shame by the severity of virtuous criticism: and as they cannot make atonement to outraged morality by correcting their works, no one thinks himself authorised to do it for them. The case of living authors is the exact reverse. They are adventuring their literary labours before a public, who have a full right to investigate the merits of every candidate before they affix to his works the stamp of fame. In this investigation there is every encouragement to employ the utmost freedom; for besides that preference which is due to the permanent character of religion and virtue over the dubious and unsettled pretensions of a recent production, the author is competent to controvert or acknowledge the justice of the strictures, and consequently, either to vindicate or amend the obnoxious parts of his performance.

Having premised these observations, I proceed to the more immediate subject of this letter. In reading *Mr. Godwin's Life of Chaucer*, I was particularly offended with certain sentiments; and could not but lament that a work, which embraces such an interesting portion of poetical and literary history, should be contaminated with remarks and expressions, which, if they do not wage open war against christianity, are yet perfectly irreconcileable with its doctrines and its spirit.

Among those parts of the work which, to a Christian Observer, must appear highly objectionable, are the reasonings which Mr. Godwin employs upon some of the peculiarities of the Romish

church. A representation of these peculiarities certainly formed a necessary part of that discussion, which purported to give a clue to the imagery of Chaucer. But surely it was not necessary in making such a representation to palliate, if not even vindicate, some of the most glaring corruptions of the christian faith; still less was such conduct to be expected from a protestant writer of the nineteenth century, from a descendant of those ancestors who reformed the church from these corruptions at the expence of their blood, and least of all from Mr. Godwin.

On the subject of masses for the dead, and auricular confessions, Mr. Godwin is, at least, an apologist. On the first of these points he thus reasons.

"Prayer for the dead is unfortunately liable to abuses, &c. but if we put these and other abuses out of our minds, we shall probably confess, that it is difficult to think of an institution more consonant to the genuine sentiments of human nature, than that of masses for the dead." No intimation, it should be observed, is conveyed throughout the whole passage of the unscriptural nature of such a doctrine. The abuses specified in the sentences omitted relates only to the power of the priest and certain absurdities; and the *other* abuses are not explained. To a protestant reader it should, however, be suggested, that such a tenet is utterly anti-scriptural, and highly dangerous to the whole fabric of his hopes. If prayer for the dead could avail, why did our Lord state of the rich man, that he died, was buried, and that in *hell* he lifted up his eyes? Why did he tell the Jews "if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins, and whither I go ye *cannot* come?" Nay, if death be not "the night on which no man can work," neither by himself nor (through bequests for such a purpose), by the medium of others, why did the apostles so press upon men to *work out* their own salvation, and to give all diligence that they might make their election SURE?

On *auricular* confessions this author, among remarks tending to its apology, has the following

"Devout men have pressed the continued recollection of the omnipresence of an all-perfect being." This, however, Mr. Godwin says, does not answer; for it "depends upon the abstruse and obscure image we may frame of a being, who thus represented, is too unlike ourselves to be of sufficient and uniform operation upon our conduct." vol. i. p. 47. To this observation it is natural to reply, that the *unlikeness* of the Diety to us renders his uniform presence with us more credible than it would be upon any other

supposition; that his *unlikeness* to us conveys him to our consciences as a less partial and flexible observer of our conduct, than the holiest of our species would be; and that if the appeal were made to *fact*, we might challenge the church of Rome to shew, in that case, that the dread of auricular confession to a fallible creature ever wrought with more success than the sense of an omnipresent Deity did in him, who said, under circumstances of singular embarrassment, "How shall I do this wickedness and *sin against God?*"

In pursuing his apology for these errors, this author, among other remarks upon *extreme unction*, observes, "Nothing can be more obvious than that to inform an expiring man, that he is at the point of death, partakes something of the nature of administering to him a dose of poison;" and shortly after he proceeds, "Death, in the eye of sobriety and reason, is an inevitable accident, of which we ought not to make too anxious an account. Live well, would be the recommendation of the enlightened moralist, and die as you can: it is in all cases a scene of debility and pain, in which human nature appears in its humblest and most mortifying aspect: but it is not too much. Let not the thought of death taint all the bewitching pleasures, and all the generous and heroical adventure of life." vol. i. p. 51. In this extraordinary passage we have a demonstrative proof of the darkness into which men are thrown, and the degradation to which they are reduced by forsaking the light, and renouncing the hopes, of the gospel. Whatever may be the fact, on Mr. Godwin's principles, "Nothing can be more obvious upon *christian* principles," than that to inform an expiring man that he is at the point of death, partakes, in no degree, "of the nature of administering to him a dose of poison;" for, if he be a real christian it *cannot* alarm him, if he be not he *ought* to be alarmed. The possible attainment of mercy, even at the point of death, is an imperious reason for informing every "expiring man" of his condition; and it is not, therefore, he who informs, but he who withholds such information, that administers the deleterious dose.

But what shall be said of this delineation which Mr. Godwin has given of death, as of "an inevitable accident of which we ought not to make too anxious an account?" or to what school of wisdom shall we refer the admonition, which he ascribes to "an enlightened moralist?" If, by "an inevitable accident," Mr. Godwin means only an inevitable *event*, it would have been

as well if he had employed a mode of expression better suited to that scheme of religion which acquaints us that "it is *appointed* unto all men once to die." If he had also considered, that "after death" cometh "the judgment," he would, probably, have thought it difficult "to make too anxious an account" of an event which conducts a fallible being to the tribunal of a righteous and infallible judge. If this enlightened (or rather *illuminated*) moralist, whose counsel Mr. Godwin brings forward, had taken a lesson from the humblest of those who have "seen the visions of the Almighty," he would have held a language more honourable to God, and more consolatory to man. He would have learnt, that if death be in all cases a scene of debility and pain, (which is yet questionable,) still the death of the righteous is such, as even the wicked wish to die. He would have learnt that they who live well, in the christian sense of the term, are not left to die as they can; but that when flesh and heart fail, then God is the strength of their heart, and their portion for ever.

Again—if there be a scene in which death represents "human nature in its humblest and most mortifying aspect," Mr. Godwin must be told, that there is yet another scene in which it represents human nature, when sanctified by divine grace, under an aspect the most dignified and sublime; as putting off the burden and defilement of the flesh, and ascending at once to happiness and glory. Nor are these representations founded upon mere sentiments and theories; they have been vouched for and illustrated by innumerable witnesses; they have been supported, not only by scripture-instances, but by examples of the most unquestionable authenticity, in every condition of life, and in every age of christianity: in a word, if Mr. Godwin would describe a dying scene in such a manner as to show how much the terrors of death may be subdued. and this "inevitable accident," this "scene of debility and pain," most magnanimously encountered, he must not choose for his subject the infidel, exchanging "the bewitching pleasures" of life for an awful uncertainty, or a gloomy annihilation; but the christian, departing in peace, in hope, in joy; to "a building of God, an house not made with hands eternal in the heavens."

Though I have trespassed so much upon the patience of your readers, I must claim their attention to another passage, no less heretical and pernicious than those which have been already produced. As the whole would be too long for extraction, I shall content myself with producing the concluding paragraph. The

author had been controverting the received opinion upon the subject of martyrdom. Having questioned "the wisdom and even moral rectitude" of those who suffer death rather than renounce their faith, he thus concludes—"I ought not to sign a paper containing sentiments opposite to my own, to obtain a sum of money or an office: but I would as willingly do this at the requisition of a chief justice, as of a highwayman, if, while he grasps the paper in one hand, he presents a halter or pistol with the other. The man who acts thus towards one, I regard as a ruffian; and there is no impropriety in temporizing, to a certain degree, with a person of that sort. Nothing ought to be refused by me, when death is the alternative of refusal, except that which would so destroy my character and honour as to make the prolongation of my life a burthen and a curse." vol. ii. p. 393. A Christian Observer will not need to have it pointed out, how base and contemptible these shifting temporizing principles appear, when set beside the stern and unbending rules of conduct which Christ inculcated, and conformable to which himself and his apostles acted. If this may be taken as a specimen of infidel morality, the world must be blind indeed not to see what fatal consequences must result from its reduction to practice in society. According to the distinctions which this writer lays down, there is nothing worth contending for as a moral principle, as a sentiment of the heart, as a tenet of rectitude and truth. Reputation is every thing, conscience and God are nothing. It would be a waste of time to show the baseness and iniquity of a doctrine which modifies the immutable principles of truth, to suit the purposes of convenience; and renders them capable of an alliance (where security from personal danger requires it) with every species of prevarication.

If we had a difficulty in determining from what school of "enlightened moralists" Mr. Godwin derived his *Theory of Death*, we can have no such difficulty in regard to his *Rules of Life*. They evidently flow from that sect of instructors which teaches without conscience, and legislates without God; from that pernicious sect which silences the peremptory tone of revelation, subdues the sternness of ancient ethics, and reduces "all moral questions to a calculation of expediency." If any confirmation were wanting of what Mr. Hall asserted, that "the unholy speculations of Mr. Godwin were founded entirely on this basis," the passage above produced would supply it. The manner in which the former acute and eloquent writer has exposed this

mischievous innovation upon morals, will, I trust, operate, in some degree, as an antidote to the poison which it is now so widely diffusing. It is, however, worthy of the consideration of Mr. Hall, whether he could render christianity a more essential service than by bestowing upon this spurious doctrine of expediency a distinct and elaborate discussion. It is notorious that, in one of our universities, a system constructed on this treacherous foundation is sanctioned by the highest authority in the place; and our youth, designed for the most important and responsible stations in life, are taught the elements of morality from a work which makes an indefinite and indeterminable expediency the basis of obligation, and thereby destroys the strictness, the uniformity, and the sanctity of virtue.

The connection which these remarks have with the subject of my letter, will be sufficiently obvious to every one who is at all acquainted with the popular writers of the present day: in fact, the chain of evil, with which we are encompassed, has many links, and it is only by tracing these out, that we can determine its strength and dimensions. For my own part, I dread an accession to those writers, already too numerous, who form our taste at the hazard of our principles; and while they interest the imagination ensnare the heart. Should any thing I have said excite in men of leisure, talents, and scriptural piety, a disposition to pursue this subject to such an extent as its importance to the interests of society demands, I shall feel no ordinary gratification. At the same time I trust, that I shall not be considered as having performed a trifling duty in contributing my quota towards detecting the insidious progress of error, and fortifying the readers of our works of taste against a laxity of principle in religion and morals.

Notice of New Publications.

"Essays, in a series of letters to a friend, on the following subjects, 1. On a man's writing memoirs of himself. 2. On decision of character. 3. On the application of the epithet *Romantic*. 4. On some of the causes by which evangelical religion has been rendered less acceptable to persons of cultivated taste. By John Foster."

In these letters there is a boldness, strength and originality, both of thought and style, such as is very rarely seen. The sentiments of the writer are evangelical; and those who delight in works in which taste and piety are united, will have no ordinary pleasure in the perusal of these essays.

OBITUARY.

Mrs. MARY FLINTHAM of Philadelphia, died October 2d, 1806, aged thirty-two years. Of this excellent woman it is not intended to give any thing like a full biographical memoir. The closing scene of her life is that which it is designed principally to present to the view of our readers; and even of this it is not proposed to make a full disclosure. She was herself fearful as will be seen, that what she said might be misconstrued and censured by the world, and therefore wished that it might be confined to her family and intimate friends. It is intended to pay what may appear to be a suitable regard to this wish, without so far yielding to it as to deprive the friends of religion of an edifying example of the triumph of christian faith over the king of terrors.*

Mrs. Flintham had received a christian education, and through the whole of her life had manifested a turn of mind more than ordinarily disposed to contemplation. She never appeared to relish that dissipation and those pursuits of fashionable levity, to which the younger part of her sex, in a populous city, are so often devoted, and to share in which she was not without many solicitations. As far as she yielded at all, it seemed rather to be the effect of complaisance than the dictate of inclination. Her family, books, and the converse of select friends, appeared to furnish the pleasures in which she most delighted. Yet her disposition was remarkably cheerful and social, and she was formed to feel the sentiments of friendship in all their warmth. For obedience, attention and affection to her parents, she was much distinguished. From a very early period of life she had regularly and cheerfully attended on public worship, and treated all the institutions of religion with respect. But though her mind was turned to seriousness, and religious impressions had been felt by her with considerable force for a length of time before, it was not till within about five years of her death, that she found herself so well satisfied with her state as to make an open profession of religion. After this, however, she appears to have made a rapid progress in the divine life.

Within a year of her decease she had lost a mother whose

* What she said on her death bed was written down, as far as it could be recolleted, a short time after it was uttered. Where quotations are made, it is to be understood that they are taken from this manuscript, sometimes with a small correction of the expression, but with as little alteration as possible of the sense.

piety and worth were eminent and exemplary, and to whom this daughter, as well as her other children, felt, as was due, the strongest filial attachment. A few months previously to her own death Mrs. Flintham had occasion to mourn with her husband the death of his only remaining child by a former wife—a very promising boy, whom the subject of this memoir appeared to love with an affection truly maternal.

Mrs. Flintham had been married about four years, and died during the confinement which followed the birth of her third child. She appeared remarkably well for about a week after her confinement, and was then taken with a violent pain in her head and side, which were supposed to be of the rheumatic kind. Some applications which were ordered by her physician afforded a temporary relief; but in a few days she fell into a nervous fever, attended with delirium. Before this had taken place, however, and while her friends were flattering themselves that there was little danger in her case, she herself was deeply impressed with the expectation that her dissolution was at hand. Her husband being alone with her in her chamber, observed that her eyes were very intently and significantly fixed upon him, and asked her the cause. "Can you, my dear," said she, "bear trouble?" He inquired with anxiety why she put such a question to him. "I am," she replied, "about to leave you, and my chief concern is for you and our dear children. But they will be a great comfort to you when I am gone. I have had many struggles for you, and I trust I have been heard. You have frequently, on coming into this room, thought me asleep, but I was otherwise engaged."

After she fell into a delirium, her mind, even in its wanderings, appeared to be almost constantly occupied with some devout or pious sentiment. A storm happened during this period, and the wind and rain being at times very audible in her apartment, seemed to impress her with a sense of the divine presence and majesty. She was continually calling on those around her to be still, and know that God was the Lord, and repeating "The Lord reigneth let the earth rejoice," with other passages of scripture of similar import.

Having been delirious, the greater part of the time, for two or three days, she was then favoured with an interval of perfect rationality and composure, which lasted for some hours. It occurred during the night, and no one was present at its commencement but her nurse. She employed the first part of it in fervent secret prayer. She then requested the nurse to come to her bed-side,

whom she tenderly and faithfully admonished on the subject of religion. After this, she requested that her youngest sister might be awakened and called to her. When she came, Mrs. F. began, with requesting her to be composed, and then addressed her thus: "My dear S——, the hour of my departure from the world is nearly come. But scenes of everlasting pleasure open to my view. I have been pleading with my God for you all. That he may send his spirit to renew and sanctify your hearts, has been my most earnest prayer. I have often wished that my life, or my death, might be the cause of awakening to many souls, particularly to my dear relatives. For you, my dear girl, I have had a mother's care. Let me then entreat you to prepare for an hour like this. It must be an awful one, without God's presence. But oh! how great his grace to me, a guilty, weak and helpless worm. Though I have approached his holy table too often with a cold and inanimate heart, yet he has not cast me off, as altogether an unworthy partaker. I trusted that at length he would, out of my weakness, ordain strength; and, blessed be his name, he has done it. Astonishing goodness! to grant me now such a lively hope in regard to the eternal world. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that I shall live in him. Yes, my soul, arrayed in the robe that Jesus wrought, shall be spotless and happy. I shall appear with humble confidence before the throne, there to join the general assembly and church of the first born, in praising the riches of redeeming love. In a few hours more I shall behold our dear mother. Weep not, why would you detain me here? It is but a vale of tears at best." Her sister here remarked, that there was yet hope of her life. She replied—"Yes, I dare say you hope and wish for my life; but you must be resigned to the Lord's will. I do not profess to know with certainty that this conversation is the last I shall ever have with you, though I rather think it is. If so, let it never be forgotten. If I live, it will serve to cement our affection. But as I expect to die, let me counsel you not to grieve for me, as I grieved for those who have gone before me to eternity. In that I committed much sin. You have stronger nerves and greater fortitude than I have possessed, and I entreat you to exert yourself on this trying occasion. Think of me often, but do not grieve immoderately. Be with my dear husband as often as your cares will permit. I know they are such that you will have but little time to bestow on any thing else. Oh my dear partner! he it is who will feel the wound. S—, rouze yourself in his behalf. He will require all your sympathy. Re-

member my babes too. To the God of my salvation I commit them, and in him I have great consolation. I trust I have his assurance that he will support my husband and protect my little ones. Oh my dear earthly parent! To thee I would speak, but I cannot. If in this world I see him not, bare to him what I repeat. Tell him I have often prayed in his behalf." She here added something farther as a message to her father, and then again addressed her sister. "Oh my dear sister! remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the cares and concerns of a family come upon you. What is the world and its vanities but a shadow—a tale that is told: but they that put their trust in God will find him at all times a present helper. O with what confidence I can say, *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly:* yet not my will but thine be done."

[*To be concluded in our Next.*]

Died, at his dwelling, in Pequea, state of Pennsylvania, on the 16th instant, Mr. George M'Ilvain, aged 65 years.

Of death and the grave, it has been said, that they are all *mouth*, and no *ears*. Deaf to the cries of distress, they devour the young and the old, the bad and the good, without distinction. We regret the frailty of nature, which permits the world no longer to enjoy a worthy man. We embalm his memory. We wet his tomb with tears of affectionate remembrance.

The real worth of the deceased was such, that it ought to be recorded in characters, which bear marks of internal regard and value, more than of *customary* praise. Yet his life furnishes few materials for the biographer. It was not diversified by many strange incidents; was not varied by many changing scenes; was not fruitful in anecdote. He was none of those men, who shine with a splendor either false or overwhelming. But the rays of his goodness were solid, and diffused substantial influence. His life was calm, consistent, pure, inoffensive, useful. If we may judge from appearances, his mind was habitually serene; undisturbed by ambition, or by any of the political passions. Enslaved to no sensual appetite; addicted to no vice; his sobriety, even in early life, was proverbial. The same inflexible sobriety and integrity distinguished his future days. His benevolent attentions to all his neighbours, conciliated universal affection and esteem. He was a lover and promoter of peace; an enemy to no one; and has not left, perhaps an enemy behind!

He feared God from his earliest youth. He had a settled delight in the duties of religion; was alive to its vast importance to man; and, not only felt, but adorned, its power. But his piety was without ostentation. His actions were the best criterion of the tendency of his mind. An attendance on the *public* worship of the Almighty, remarkably regular, was one excellent trait in his character.

At the time of his death, he had been, *forty years*, a ruling elder of the presbyterian church: an office, which he valued more highly than any worldly distinction; and which he filled with equal honour to himself and advantage to others; *always studying those things which make for peace*. He was often a representative in the presbytery of Newcastle; and frequently in the general assembly of the presbyterian church. He never appeared more happy, than when employed in this field of action. To be in it, many a long journey he travelled, when others chose to indulge their domestic repose; or to attend to the concerns of the world.

The death of such a man, though he was not destined to shine in the circles of literature, of science, or of worldly parade, is a real loss to society. His death was, like his life, *peaceful*. For acceptance with God, his dependence was on *the atonement*. Animated with a good hope, he was willing to die. To the writer of this he said, two days before his death, "I would as soon go forward as return."

These are thy triumphs, O religion! Thou enablest thy votaries to desire what others dread. Thou teachest them to smile on death and the grave. Thou doublest the honours of age, and renderest even its infirmities respectable. The wicked, *though they live long, yet shall they be nothing regarded; and their last age shall be without honour*.